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Gov't approves plan to bring India's remaining 'lost tribe' Bnei Menashe back to Israel

The new immigrants will undergo Orthodox conversion through the Chief Rabbinate and will mainly settle in Nof HaGalil and other northern communities.



Newly arrived Jewish immigrants from Manipur in India, members of the 'Bnei Menashe' community arrive to the Ben Gurion international airport on March 22, 2018. The 'Bnei Menashe' community belongs to one of the 10 'lost tribes' of Israel exiled by an Assyrian empire 27 centuries ago.(photo credit: YOSHI ZAMIR/FLASH90)ByALEX WINSTONNOVEMBER 23, 2025 16:38Updated: NOVEMBER 23, 2025 17:32

Israel's government approved a plan on Sunday to bring the majority of the remaining members of the [Bnei Menashe](#) community from [India to Israel](#) over the next five years.

The proposal, submitted by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Aliyah and Integration Minister Ofir Sofer, will enable approximately 5,800 members of the northeastern [Indian community](#) to immigrate by 2030. About 1,200 are expected to arrive by the end of 2026.



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There are currently an estimated 5,000 Bnei Menashe already living in Israel.

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The Bnei Menashe, who trace their ancestry to one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, live primarily in the Indian states of Mizoram and Manipur among the Kuki-Chin and Mizo tribal populations. Over the past two decades, roughly 4,000 community members have already made aliyah under previous government decisions.



Indian Jews place their hands to their faces as they take part in prayers at a synagogue in Aizawl. The "Bnei Menashe" or children of Manasseh tribe spread across Mizoram and Manipur states were officially recognised by sephardic or oriental Jews. (credit: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)

Rebuilding Israel's North with Indian Bnei Menashe communities

The new immigrants will undergo Orthodox conversion through the Chief Rabbinate and will mainly settle in Nof HaGalil and other northern communities, as part of efforts to strengthen the Galilee region following the war.

"This is an important and Zionist decision that will also bring strength to the North and the Galilee," Netanyahu said, thanking Sofer and Nof HaGalil Mayor Ronen Plot for their partnership in the initiative.

"Today we are making an important and valuable decision that will enable the aliyah of members of the [Bnei Menashe community](#) over the next five

years," Sofer stated. "This aliyah joins the blessed aliyah we have seen in the past two years from many diasporas, aliyah that strengthens the resilience, solidarity, and renewal of the State of Israel.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich called it "a renewed connection of brothers who have carried the yearning for Zion in their hearts for generations."

A delegation will travel to India within the week to begin processing applications in coordination with the Chief Rabbinate, the Conversion Authority, the Population and Immigration Authority, the Foreign Ministry, and the Jewish Agency. The initiative will cost approximately NIS 90 million through 2026, covering immigration, conversion, housing in absorption centers, Hebrew language instruction, and employment integration.



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